

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-2214**

June 30, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
Room H-305, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Room H-204, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Room S-221, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Room S-230, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader McCarthy, Leader Schumer, and Leader McConnell:

As we continue to Build Back Better, I write today to express my strong support for the water infrastructure investments in the *American Jobs Plan* and urge for these provisions to be included in the final infrastructure legislation. We must address our nation's water crisis, which affects our drinking water, wastewater, and sewage systems.

The damage caused by the heavy rainfall that recently swept over Southeast Michigan illustrates how our deteriorating infrastructure is failing Michiganders. Over the past 10 years, my constituents, and the surrounding communities in the region, have experienced several natural disasters and extraordinary flooding far beyond the designated capacity of the region's storm sewer system. The most recent flooding was no different, resulting in countless power outages, flooded roadways, flooded homes, and displaced residents. Tragically, over 38,000 homes in Southeast Michigan were without power, and Interstate 94 (I-94), a vital transit route for commerce, remains closed as water levels overwhelmed pump stations.<sup>1</sup> In response to the heavy rainfall and widespread flooding, Governor Gretchen Whitmer declared a state of emergency for Wayne County on June 26, 2021.<sup>2</sup> By declaring a state of emergency, the Governor made available all state resources to ensure the county has access to the assistance they need to respond. The recent storms continue to demonstrate why we must invest in our infrastructure to ensure resiliency against urgent global threats such as climate change.

<sup>1</sup>S. Rahal and J. Grzelewski. "Whitmer declares state of emergency for Wayne County; Detroit seeks federal assistance after major flooding." *The Detroit News*. (June 26, 2021). Retrieved from <https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/wayne-county/2021/06/26/heavy-rains-flood-wayne-county-freeways-leave-cars-submerged/5356570001/>

<sup>2</sup>Office of Governor Gretchen Whitmer. "Governor Whitmer Declares State of Emergency for Wayne County Due to Impacts of Heavy Rainfall and Flooding." (June 26, 2021). Retrieved from [https://www.michigan.gov/documents/msp/Govs\\_-\\_News\\_Release\\_-\\_Governor\\_Whitmer\\_Declares\\_State\\_of\\_Emergency\\_for\\_Wayne\\_County\\_Due\\_to\\_Impacts\\_of\\_Heavy\\_Rainfall\\_and\\_Flooding\\_729107\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/msp/Govs_-_News_Release_-_Governor_Whitmer_Declares_State_of_Emergency_for_Wayne_County_Due_to_Impacts_of_Heavy_Rainfall_and_Flooding_729107_7.pdf)

Significant investments in water infrastructure are needed to help tackle the challenges we are seeing in my home state of Michigan and across the country. That is why I was proud to introduce the *Water Affordability, Transparency, Equity, and Reliability (WATER) Act*, legislation that paves the way to rebuild our failing water system by addressing maintenance and modernization, cleanliness and safety, affordability, and social justice. Provisions in this legislation, coupled with the *American Jobs Plan*, will ensure that every Michigander and American across the country will have access to clean and affordable drinking water, while protecting public health and our surface and ground water resources.

I applaud our emergency response coordinators and local leaders for their work in addressing the widespread flooding and working to expedite our community's recovery. However, much more needs to be done, and that begins with updating and upgrading our aging infrastructure, specifically our water infrastructure. The heavy rains in Detroit and surrounding areas clearly bring to light the problems that occur when we neglect our water infrastructure. I look forward to working with the White House and my congressional colleagues to ensure our stormwater management systems provide flood protections, improve the quality of life for all Michiganders, and our local economic development.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Brenda L. Lawrence  
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., President of the United States